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ON THE TRAIL OF "PRETTY BOY" FLOYD

**A REPORTER'S THRILLING REPORT
OF AN OUTLAW'S STORY**

By W. R. DRAPER

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OF AN OUTLAW'S STORY**

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THE TRAIL OF
"BOY"
FLOYD

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By E. Haldeman-Julius

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ON THE TRAIL OF "PRETTY BOY" FLOYD

The phone rang at midnight. "Listen," said the news editor of the *Kansas City Journal-Post* at the other end of the long-distance wire, "listen carefully, Draper. 'Pretty Boy' Floyd has been trapped over in Ohio by G-men. They will kill him before daybreak. I want you to hustle down to Sallisaw and contact the Floyd family. Break the news to them and get their reaction."

This was more or less a commonplace assignment in the wild days of 1934 when bandits were tearing down the highways shooting innocent persons, robbing banks, and raising unnecessary trouble almost everywhere in the southwest region. But it did not make sense to me, for only a few days before I had contacted this notorious bad man in his lair, near the small town of Aiken in Oklahoma's Cookson hills. He was then preparing to surrender, so his friends told me. The gangster himself said he was only "resting."

As I hung up the phone, my wife said, "I'll go with you. That's a long drive." I was certainly glad to have her volunteer to make the motor car journey of 250 miles across the lonely Ozark hills, especially at this early hour. In a short time we were speeding down U. S. highway 71. It was then 2 o'clock in the mornnig.

A full moon lighted the tree-clad hills, but the hollows along the roadside were black as ink. As daybreak neared, we saw the windows of farm houses being lighted along the route, farmers preparing for another day in the fields, gathering in the crops. For it was Fall, the 22nd of October, 1934.

We stopped at a barbecue stand on the road south of Winslow for breakfast. Daylight was just beginning to shove up in the eastern skies. "What's the radio saying, little girl?" I inquired of the pert waitress. "Well, for one thing, they say Charley Floyd has been trapped over in Ohio. I don't believe it."

"Why not? That's as good a place to take him as any," I replied. The girl gave me a mean look. No doubt Floyd had been a liberal patron of this roadside joint.

"Might be as good a place to trap him as any," she sneered. "But I happen to know he's not in Ohio. He's over there," waving a hand toward the wild, almost uninhabited Cookson hill region.

"What makes you think he's over there?" I bantered, angling for information, of course.

"Well, he was here Saturday night. It's now Monday daybreak. I know he don't have a flying machine."

My wife and I drove on. My job to be done, if at all, had to be handled quickly. If the G-men were to kill the "pretty boy" before daybreak, as my editor had stated, I must contact the mother and wife of the bandit quickly thereafter and get the news for the same edition in which the story of his capture would appear.

If Floyd was really in the Cookson hills his mother and brother, both of whom I had interviewed less than a week previously, would know. It was possible that I might find Ruby, his wife, at Fort Smith, Ark., and

she too would give me the "low down." They had all talked freely when I last saw them, had even directed me to the bandit's hide-out where I went to see and talk with him.

About 9 o'clock that morning I was sitting on the front porch of the Floyd family cottage at Sallisaw talking with the mother and sister. "Where's Ruby?" I inquired. "Oh, she don't stay here no more," replied Mary, the outlaw's sister. I had been told by others that the outlaw's wife and mother were on the outs.

Both mother and sister insisted that Charley had not left his hide-out for the last month and he was just where he lived when I was over at Aiken seven days previously. "Oh, he might be out a-fishin' some place, but it's a cinch he's not in Ohio," laughed the sister.

"Go down to the filling station and talk with E. W.," said Mary, friendly-like. "He's tell you where you can talk with Charley; that is, if you want to." Mary grinned, because she knew that I had backed off from the last "talk" with Charley, for reasons which I will explain a little later in this story.

E. W. greeted me like an old chum. He was only about 20 years old, a tall, angular fellow, not at all like his beetle-browed, short, squatty bandit brother. He was dressed as usual in overalls and jumper, wearing heavy work shoes and no hat. E. W. was a car greaser and earned his livelihood the hard way. It was said about Sallisaw that neither he nor any of his sisters or mother had ever shared in "Pretty Boy's" mohey.

AN OUTLAW RUNS OUT OF CASH

"They've treed the wrong wolf," replied E. W., as I explained the reason for my visit and insisted that newspaper reporters were usually right on such a big story-lead. "G-men and reporters don't go off, at least ordinarily, half-cocked."

"That might be so, but you saw him yourself out there at Aiken. He's still there getting ready to surrender." I had seen him all right, had been told that he was "just resting," and that he planned to give himself up. I also knew that Charley had often changed his mind, in fact he had been forced to make some mighty quick changes in the past. I felt certain that the G-men had him surrounded. I tried to impress that certain fact on the outlaw's brother.

"Maybe Charley's run out of ready money," I suggested. "Maybe he decided to find a quick way to replenish the cash box." E. W. gave me a quick look, nodding.

"Now there might be something to that, Draper," he replied shaking his head up and down. "I do know he was short of funds. I also know he was being pressed for money—by Ruby and others." E. W. said he thought I might have the right hunch, so he began to shuck his heavy shoes and overalls, and get ready to ride. He asked me to go along, but I thanked him and declined. I had no object in talking with the bandit, even if he were there.

I then hunted Bert Cotton, the town marshal. Cotton was the first officer to put the handcuffs on Floyd. That was soon after Floyd had hit the bandit trail, years before. I told Cotton what I had heard and why I was there. He believed that Floyd was in his hide-out and not over in Ohio.

For the second time that afternoon I returned to the Floyd cottage to have further conversation with the outlaw's mother. Mrs. Floyd was insistent that her son was not in Ohio and the G-men were chasing the wrong man. She said it with a confident smile. Mary, the sister, said, "Why, I talked with Charley Saturday. He was in good spirits then, even though Ruby had been bothering him for money."

The fact that Ruby, his wife, had been worrying him about money made me feel quite certain that Charley had flown the coop and was

out on the highway, somewhere, seeking ready cash. Why not over in Ohio? These bandits sometimes wandered far from the home base when seeking funds. In fact, Charley had for some time kept his gun sheathed while riding the Oklahoma highways.

I then went to the telephone office and called my editor, Johnny Johnson, in Kansas City. "Stick around, Draper," he replied. "Floyd managed to get out of the trap, but the G-men are too thick for him. He's bound to get it today, sometime." Johnson said he would give me a ring when "it happened."

That afternoon at 2 o'clock I got the call. Floyd had been killed and properly tagged. In fact, while dying, he admitted his identity. I hustled out to Floyd's home.

"It's another lie," shouted Mary, defiantly.

"I'll never believe it from a reporter," grumbled the mother, who went at once to the telephone and sent a wire to the chief of police at East Liverpool, Ohio.

While talking with them, E. W. drove up, after his trip to the hills. He was looking glum. "Charley's sure not out there. Say, he left Saturday. You may be right," he said to me.

NO TEARS WERE SHED

The mother began pacing the floor and Mary stood at the front door with fists clenched and stamping the floor. "They shot my brother down like a dog," she cried. "He never had a chance. Worked here in the sand hills for a corn-bread living. Now they trapped him and killed him before he had a chance to fight."

I did not know then that Charley had gone down firing at the G-men, both hands claspings pistols. I did not know that he was hidden under a corn crib and had fought like a tiger. But what good was it, anyhow, to make reply to this girl, mad as a wet hen and seemingly about to scratch my eyes out? I had enough of a story, so I turned and walked away.

Meantime, I saw that neither of the women shed a tear. It was not their way of grieving.

That evening Mary was back on her job as waitress in a small cafe adjoining the bank, the same bank that her brother and one of his pals had robbed early in their crime career. E. W. was at the filling station and I had him grease my car. The mother was at home making a dress for the funeral service, which she had said I would not be permitted to attend.

Around the little town of Sallisaw, Okla., some of the friends of the Floyd family were taking up a collection so that Charley might be given a decent burial.

As news filtered into the country, friends from the backwoods came and went in their rickety old motor cars. Many of them left the Floyd cottage, I could see from where I sat in my automobile, with bowed heads, the women brushing away tears. Charley had been a meal ticket to many of these folks during the depression years. To others he was just a country boy who had taken the wrong road.

HILLBILLIES DROVE HIM OUT

A G-man who walked around town with me, said, "The hill-billies drove him out to get more money. That's how we got a fresh trace of him." I could not agree with the G-man, who was more of a stranger to the ways of these people than I. I believe Ruby's demands for money, and his anxiety to please her, caused the bandit to go on a foray—and he was caught and killed.

When Floyd's body came to Sallisaw the following day it was in a plain box. The local undertaker supplied a nice coffin and a new suit of clothing and the corpse of Floyd was exhibited to one and all. He looked as natural as in life.

The town was filled with reporters, news photographers and news-reel men. Sallisaw accepted the funeral event as a gala affair and enjoyed the notoriety. But the Floyd family remained in close seclusion, and Ruby, the wife, and Jacky, the little son, were nowhere to be found.

At the graveside service, held in the small town of Aiken, there was a liberal sprinkling of outsiders, but only a few natives. I was surprised as I expected to see the whole country turn out. An officer told me that a half-dozen G-men were mingling with the crowd trying to find accomplices. It is possible word of this effort got to the hill-billies, for news like that travels mighty fast and the hill-billies are naturally a suspicious lot.

The glamour of an outlaw funeral was entirely in the minds of the news writers as Charley was buried without flowers, without music. Mother, sister and brother stood on one side of the little grave; wife, Jackie and the preacher across the open grave from them. The preacher said a few words but offered no prayer.

I noticed that as the clods began to fall on the pine box which enclosed the coffin, Mrs. Floyd fainted away, but others of the clan held their emotions in check.

* * *

I SAW THE BANDIT'S WIFE

Four months previous to the death of Charley Floyd I received an assignment from a New York newspaper to contact Ruby, his wife, and try to persuade her to write a story of her life with the then public enemy number one. Current reports were to the effect she was divorcing him, so it seemed to be an opportune time to make a move in that direction.

The sheriff at Fort Smith told me where I could find her. I walked up to the house and knocked on the front door. A frowsy-haired blonde answered.

"Ruby don't live here no more," she said. "The landlady made her get out because Charley got to comin' here to see her. There's a man across the street, living upstairs. He can tell you where to find Ruby, Charley too, if you want him."

I explained my mission to this man. I told him of the cash offer I had received to get Ruby's life story, a signed article. "I'll help you," he smiled. "In fact I'm glad to do it, for Ruby owes me money I loaned her to pay her hospital bill. That will be the slickest way for her to pay."

He went on to say that Charley was not contributing anything to Ruby's support now; in fact she was really going to divorce him on the charge of non-support. "I think Charley's getting short of cash or he would kick in, for he is surely stuck on Ruby," he said as I glanced over a bunch of pictures of the outlaw's wife and little boy which he had on his desk. "You can have them pictures if they'll do you any good."

I tried to appear unconcerned but those pictures were worth a good deal of money to me right then because they would help swing the story with my New York editor whether or not I got a signed statement from Ruby. "Thanks a lot," I told him. "Now I know you're a good Indian." He was, in fact, part Cherokee, the same as Ruby Floyd. I had really gotten on friendly terms with this man because I told him some of my boyhood experiences among the Cherokees—some of his own people who lived around Tahlequah.

He said the bandit's wife was scheduled to be at his place in about an hour, so we sat around and talked. When she drove up, with a young

woman friend, in a small coupe and came up on the front porch, I was really amazed at her good looks. She was very plainly dressed but carried herself with ease and grace. She was neither bold nor shy in talking with me about her life with the outlaw, seeming not to be ashamed or any too pleased because of the fact, but as to details of her bandit spouse she was very non-committal.

"I am still his wife," she said, "and it would not be very nice of me to talk mean about him, even though it is true that I am going to divorce him. But that is because he cannot or will not support our little boy and me. I've got to live. But I cannot accept your offer, not now at least."

After she had driven away, my contact man said, "She's on her way now to see Charley. If he don't cough up some dough she may come right back here and give you the story. Are you prepared to hand her the cash as soon as she signs the story?"

I stayed around Fort Smith a couple of days waiting for Ruby to come back and collect from me, but she never showed up. Meantime I gathered enough details for a full page feature which appeared in the *Kansas City Journal-Post* of June 3, 1934. Here it is:

* * *

HIS WIFE WANTED HIM TO SURRENDER

The way the "law" snuffed out the lives of Clyde Barrow and his woman companion, Bonnie Parker, the other day on a Louisiana highway has put fear in the heart of Ruby Floyd, wife of Charley Floyd, notorious outlaw who has now become the southwest's number one public enemy.

Ruby would have "Pretty Boy" surrender to the Oklahoma authorities and take his punishment, she told me while here. While I failed to obtain from Ruby intimate details of her life with the number one bandit, as was desired, I had no difficulty in ascertaining the fact that she no longer admires the cognomen "moll" and has a definite wish to be rid of Floyd forever—if he is to continue his outlawry—or possibly if he comes clean with the law to help him get out of his troubles and later, after having served his time, settle down with him on a farm in the hills of eastern Oklahoma or western Arkansas.

Ruby Floyd wants a home and a family. She is tired of living in hotels and rooming houses and in fast moving motor cars and furnished houses. I asked her why she would prefer to have Charley surrender to the Oklahoma authorities. "It's his home state," she replied, "and it would be more difficult to fasten anything on him here. He also has a lot of friends in Oklahoma."

"But maybe the government would want to try him in Kansas City for the murder of Curtis Burke, the prohibition agent who was killed when the law raided Joe Lusco's place there," I suggested.

"The government has no case against Charley," the young wife interposed. "They're just guessing he was there and hung the Union Station massacre onto him. He didn't have a thing to do with either of those crimes."

Ruby took the stand that her husband had quit the crime trail. She continued, "He has quit robbing banks. He's been out of that game for almost two years. He is *not* nursing any wounds. He is *not* living with any other woman. But he is *not* furnishing me with any money, or any money for our little boy, so that's why I've got to divorce him so I can get a job and go to work. Nobody will hire me while I'm married to an outlaw."

She complained of being tired of having officers trail her, although as we sat on the porch in plain sight of many passing men and women I could not detect a sign of anyone trailing her. The sheriff had told me nobody wanted her for anything, and as far as Floyd himself was concerned, the sheriff's posse was not out hunting for him either.

"I'm tired of being trailed, tired of having a policeman step up and tap me on the shoulder and tell me the chief wanted to talk with me." I felt this was an exaggeration, from what others had told me. However, Ruby had often been put in jail and held for questioning, especially when she made her appearance around Fort Smith and Sallisaw in a lot of finery.

Ruby then went on to say she would really like to help Charley get out of his troubles so he could help her with the problem of raising little Jack Dempsey Floyd, their son. The boy's picture, which I had, showed him to be a perfect image of his notorious dad.

"He is just reaching the age, 11, where he understands everything," his mother said. "He needs a chance now of getting the best of school. But he can't get it around this section of the country." She then related how she had been forced to take little Jack out of school because his mates taunted him about his father. It did not seem fair, she averred, that the little boy had to suffer because his father could not obey the law. That was why she wished Charley would give himself up and take his punishment.

OUTLAW'S YOUNG SON WANTS A CHANCE

Mrs. Floyd wants her young son to become an attorney. She has just taken him to Fort Worth, where, she said, he has become a member of the Baptist Sunday school and where he is going to get his education to grow up and become an honorable and useful citizen.

Ruby Floyd is now 26 years old, weighs 128 pounds and is tall, lithe and brunette. She dresses tastily, but inexpensively. She moves with grace and is confident in her expressions. There is nothing bold, yet nothing shy, about this young woman who was reared in the backwoods and who left school at the age of 14, married at 16, and has since lived a slipshod existence as the wife of a ruthless machine gunner and bank robber.

Mrs. Floyd is part Cherokee Indian and looks it. The blood of old Sequoyah, the Cherokee chieftain, courses through her veins. She is proud of the distinction and never fails to tell an acquaintance about it. She stands as straight as an arrow and walks with the gliding movement of the redskin on the trail.

When talking with a stranger she assumes a graceful attitude. One would never imagine a woman of her apparent gentleness riding the country's highways with a machine gun across her lap—as Bonnie Parker did to her dying day; nor cruising in a motor car as the mate of a man accused of being one of the southwest's most desperate men.

And it is because of this contrast in the characters and make-up of the two women—Ruby Floyd and Bonnie Parker—that many sympathize with Mrs. Floyd and her young son; why so many persons here and in Oklahoma are helping her in her endeavors to properly rear little Jack Dempsey Floyd to manhood.

She is said to be a devoted mother. Those who know her best say she has carried out her end of the marriage contract more faithfully than has the "Pretty Boy." Mrs. Floyd displayed her love for her mate during my interview with her.

"Charley has always been a generous husband and a kind father," she said to me, "but he was never a great lover and had no romance about him. We got married too young, I suppose, for anything like that, and he soon got into trouble. It has been hell ever since."

Floyd married the Indian girl when she was barely 16. Within the first year of their matrimony the couple's only child was born and he was named after the one-time world's heavyweight prize fighter, Jack Dempsey, then in the zenith of his fame. Not long after the baby boy was born "Pretty Boy" went away to the harvest fields, got into trouble

at St. Louis about a highway robbery, was sentenced to the Missouri penitentiary, and, according to the wife, "things have been going from bad to worse ever since."

Whatever mannerisms, whatever vocabulary, whatever style Ruby Floyd has attained, she has won by reading and study—not by association with other women. Her life with the outlaw deprived her of the usual company of women. The necessity of living in seclusion, often on the run for weeks and months, would be enough to age the average young person. But Ruby Floyd is youth personified. She does not look even 20 years old.

"When we married at Sallisaw Charley was a hard working farmer," his wife said. "He quit school after finishing up in the sixth grade."

OUTLAW A FAVORITE WITH WOMEN

According to the folks around Sallisaw with whom I talked, Floyd was a handsome youth, unafraid, with jet black hair, soft gray eyes, and a drawling, pleasing voice. His ways won him many friends among the fair sex, even in his teens. Then along came Ruby Hardgraves of Bixby, Oklahoma, and "Pretty Boy" won her heart, much to the disappointment of many a young woman who had hoped that Floyd would have asked her for her hand.

For a time after their marriage Ruby and Charley got along as best they could on their small income. Charley was young, Ruby was younger, and Jacky was a baby in arms. But as the months passed Floyd found there were so many things the family needed, even in their two-room shanty on the yellow clay bank farm. So he began casting about. Maybe because the crops were bad; maybe because Charley was not a successful farmer; maybe because it was the ever-crying need for cash; or maybe it was the ever-growing desire to own and ride in a motor car like other young men—something like any one of these things that led Charley away from the hills for the ill-gotten money he thought would satisfy his demands.

Floyd left home with a desire in his heart to provide these few luxuries for his wife and child.

At the age of 20 he was an outlaw. One of his first jobs landed him in prison, but not before he had provided Ruby with the thrill of riding in a new motor car and the pleasure that comes to every woman from fine clothes. He came back to the hills of eastern Oklahoma, his pockets lined with cash, after the hold-up at St. Louis. That fact caused suspicion to rest upon him.

Few outlaws long remain heroes to their wives. While other women hung the picture of Floyd where they could look upon his bold, handsome features, nowhere now does Ruby retain such a picture of the bandit. Some say she does not love her bandit husband any more, but she does not admit it, and from her efforts to arrange a compromise surrender, it does not appear to me she has forsaken him.

Ruby Floyd has told persons here at Fort Smith she is tired of being pointed out as the outlaw's wife; of having her child tortured with questions; of having to move on from place to place because inn-keepers fear she will make contact with Floyd, thus bringing down upon their places a shower of bullets from invading officers. It is, indeed, a tough spot in which this woman now finds herself. At a rooming house where she lived quietly for several months she was recently dispossessed because the landlady suspected that Charley was coming there to see her. At another rooming house the landlady said she had raised the rent so high she knew Ruby would move out because she believed a man who was Floyd was coming there to see her.

"We don't want any fireworks around here," said this landlady to me. "That's why I put her out."

Another source of information was responsible for a statement that Floyd had recently spent a couple of months in Fort Smith, and, because of his changed appearance, had not been recognized.

Jack Dempsey Floyd is a bright-appearing youngster, shy and uncommunicative. He has recently been attending school at Fort Smith. But after being stricken with measles, he was taken from school and sent to Bixby to live with Ruby's father, Ben Hardgraves.

"I'LL KILL HIM ON SIGHT," SAYS CITY MARSHAL

Meanwhile I find Ruby to be a much befuddled young woman. As one of her Indian sisters of the long ago inspired John Howard Payne to write "Home, Sweet Home," Ruby is trying to inspire Charley to make a home for her in the right and proper way; otherwise she may divorce him any time. It's a toss-up which way the decision goes.

But the day I interviewed her she seemed to be a soft-spoken young woman with a big purpose ahead of her. Officers who have arrested her say it has not always been so and that when angry, the hot blood of the savage races through her veins.

Over at Sallisaw the question now being asked by a stranger is, "Is Floyd in Hollywood or Hong Kong?" Or is he in the hills close by? The folks about would like to know if he is dead, or nursing a wound, or if he has retired from banditry to give the law a break?

They do not all take the word of Ruby Floyd that he has quit the game. Travelling in the backwoods of eastern Oklahoma, I heard many interesting reports. One is that Floyd is making a moving picture, a one-reel drama in which he displays his ability with a machine gun and reconstructs some of the highlights of his wild career.

"Charley Floyd is not dead, neither is he wounded," they tell you. "Just got a little scratch, starting at the hip and running down to the left heel. He got that wound fighting with Erv Kelley two years ago."

Kelley was killed on the night of April 8, 1932, while chasing the bandit near Bixby.

Those who claim to see Floyd now and then say this slight wound is the only reminder "Pretty Boy" has of his five years of banditry. Residents of Sallisaw, where most of the Floyd family live, are outspoken in condemnation of reports that Floyd is permitted to run loose around the town. Bert Cotton is the city marshal and has been for some time. He was the first officer to arrest Floyd, picking him up on the streets of Sallisaw after the St. Louis payroll job in 1925.

"I'll kill him on sight," the little city marshal told me. "He is not running loose around Sallisaw. He may be in this country making a moving picture. Or he may be in China. But if he walks up and down the main streets of Sallisaw, I'll mow him down."

George Cheek, former sheriff of Sequoyah county, had a running fight with Floyd a few years ago and says he is not afraid to tackle him again. That may be why he is now running for sheriff again.

Mrs. Mayme Floyd, mother of the outlaw, lives in Sallisaw with her daughter, Mrs. Ruth Wafford. The mother is a worker in the Baptist church and a religious woman. She does not condone the crimes of her wayward son, but she gives him a mother's love and tries hard to disbelieve all that has been printed about him.

At 55, Mrs. Floyd has no gray hair. The home in which she lives with her daughter is modest, the furniture old. There is every appearance of lack of funds for the everyday necessities of life. I say that if Charley Floyd has stolen thousands of dollars from banks—and of this there seems to be no doubt—he has given none of it to his family.

E. W. Floyd, the younger brother, works in a garage at Sallisaw part time. Recently he helped dig a sewer on a CWA project. A city official told me he saw E. W. up to his knees in mud and water. "If I

had a brother who was a big outlaw, and had lots of money, I believe I'd make a touch," said the official.

There seem to be several replies to that question. Maybe the outlaw has never offered his relatives any money, knowing they would refuse it. Recently a letter came to Sallisaw signed by Charley Floyd. The letter was postmarked Hong Kong, China. An attorney in the town told me, "Charley is out in Hollywood, making a picture. I know because I drew up the contract."

ROBS BANK TO PLEASE PAL

At Aiken, where he was arrested—he was born in Georgia—a couple of old-timers sitting on the porch in front of the general store, said, "If you just drive out that road, turn to the left, drive another mile and turn right, leave your car and walk back in the brush and give the right signal, and you might see Charley."

But that road was mighty rough and I rode away without meeting the bandit. I then went to the home of his sister, Mrs. Wafford, for a chat. "It's really been a long time since I had a talk with Charley," she said, "although he has been by several times, always in a hurry."

Sallisaw is a busy little town, but they are never too busy there to talk about their most notorious citizen. They will gladly tell you all the latest news they have read in the papers about Floyd, but they are usually reluctant to tell you what they know first hand. The local editor pays no attention to the comings and goings of Floyd, but they do print the names of his mother, his sisters and his brother in the "social and personal" department.

"If Floyd likes the people of this town so well, why did he rob the bank here and take away \$1,400 of the good people's money?" I asked a prominent citizen.

"Oh, that was just to keep George Birdwell in a good humor," he replied. "George was his pal, you know. They had robbed a bank at Earlsboro, where Birdwell lived, so George thought it would be no more than fair if they robbed the bank here at Sallisaw. I know Charley always hated it."

While Floyd's career has been well exploited in the newspapers, his mother has never read one printed word, although her children and neighbors have told her some of the things that have been printed. She calls all of them lies. I was told that Floyd hungers to see his name and picture in the newspapers and never misses a story about his exploits.

The backwoods country here around Sallisaw is now filled with medicine peddlers who are in reality bank detectives. Federal men have pounced down on horse traders and travelling men with the hopes of squeezing out some information. That was one reason I did not choose to personally interview the outlaw. I was honor bound to report the contact, the time and the place, to the "law" as quickly as possible. That was something I hesitated doing.

In talking with a deputy sheriff, he made this prophecy, "Give him time and he'll starve out, or else get tired and quit." After spending a couple of days working up information for this story and talking with half a hundred natives, I am forced to believe that, sooner or later, Charley will just quit.

How wrong that proved to be.

* * *

FLOYD LIVES IN DISGUISE

Two months later, with Floyd's name still a front-page feature, the *American Weekly*, of New York, wired me to go to Sallisaw and gather facts for a full page feature about the exploits of the then public enemy number one. On August 29th, 1934, this story appeared under a Tulsa date line, although I wrote and wired the article from Fort Smith, closest big town to Floyd's lair:

* * *

With desperado John Dillinger riddled with bullets, Clyde Barrow, Texas outlaw, shot to pieces, there remains "Pretty Boy" Floyd, who is a bandit in the same class and apparently too clever for the hundreds of detectives.

Floyd is hiding in the wild lands of eastern Oklahoma. He knows every foot of that country, has friends everywhere among the natives. The county, state and federal officers have no stomach for poking their noses into this hideout. He has robbed almost a hundred banks and killed eight or 10 persons who got in his way.

In the helplessness of the Department of Justice detectives to get their hands on Dillinger or Floyd, Congress was asked to pass a law allowing the United States Attorney General to issue a reward of \$25,000 for any criminal who was too smart for the department to run down. It was hoped that a huge sum like this would tempt some friend of Dillinger to turn him in.

And that is just what happened. For months government detectives by the dozen had been hunting for the desperado—not a trace of him was found. Dillinger was living in Chicago, went where he pleased, attended the movies with his friends, but the Department of Justice men there had no idea where he was. Then the reward was offered and one day a message came to the bewildered detectives that if they would stand out in front of a certain movie theatre they would see him attend the performance as usual. The detectives followed the tip, shot Dillinger, and the reward will be paid.

The people of Oklahoma and neighboring states who have been sorely tormented by "Pretty Boy" Floyd's raids are now waiting to see whether the Attorney General will dangle a similar reward before the eyes of the mountaineer acquaintances of the outlaw. The big money reward brought the helpless detectives to Dillinger; perhaps a similar reward will end Floyd's career in the same way.

Charley Floyd is now living in complete disguise as a mountain farmer, somewhere in the fastness of the Cookson hills of eastern Oklahoma. He is surrounded by old friends, and he can never be located unless he chooses to come out and surrender—or is betrayed.

Outlaw Floyd's mother says the only good outlaw is a dead outlaw and she is preparing to bury him as such. Although other members of the Floyd family think he has a good chance to reform, Mrs. Mayme Floyd, the 55-year-old widowed mother of this notorious desperado, sincerely believes that the only way Charley will ever return to her is in a casket. (This prophecy proved true.) So she has made his grave ready in the little cemetery at Aiken and will lay Charley away beside her husband, Walter F. Floyd. (This is just what she did less than two months after I wrote this story.)

Eight years ago Walter Floyd was killed in a mountain feud. James Mills, a neighbor, was cleared of the shooting. Later Mills mysteriously disappeared. To avenge the law Charley is believed to have decided upon some killing himself.

Now the mother is patiently waiting, and feels that it will not be long, before she will weep again in the lonely Aiken graveyard when another of her loved ones will be lowered into the clay. Mrs. Floyd is a deeply religious woman, a worker in the Baptist church. She is also a

firm believer in retribution and is willing that the activities of her son should be expiated with his life. (When this really happened Mrs. Floyd, as previously explained in this article, very much objected to the manner in which Charley's life was taken, claiming he was not given a chance.)

On the other hand, while "Pretty Boy" Floyd's mother is ready to receive the body of her son in a casket, his Indian wife, Ruby Floyd, is making the fight of her life to have him brought face to face with the law—alive. She wants him to accept his punishment like a man.

I DID ENCOUNTER FLOYD

Ruby Floyd is not entirely revengeful; on the contrary she has shown extraordinary loyalty to the man who has for years treated both her and their boy with inconsideration. Ruby Floyd believes that her outlaw spouse has a long time for good behavior ahead of him and that he can atone for five misspent years as a bandit. She and other relatives do not believe that Charley has committed anything like the number of crimes charged to his account.

Natives in the eastern Oklahoma hills profess not to fear Floyd but to welcome him to their homes because he always leaves a good supply of groceries and cash. Floyd has never lost a motor car to an officer in his numerous open battles but that the back end was found to be crammed full of canned goods and merchandise of one kind and another he was taking to his friends in the backwoods.

A trip through the Cookson hills to contact Floyd's relatives and visit places where Floyd has been recently, might seem a hazardous undertaking. Natives assured the writer, a representative of the *American Weekly*, that should Floyd be encountered at one or another of the places visited there would not be the slightest danger.

(This might be a good place to say that I did encounter Floyd. I passed him on the road a couple of miles from Aiken. But I did not stop and talk with him, although the outlaw slowed down his motor car and gave the "high sign" to my companion. The reason I did not stop was because I would have had to report this contact to the sheriff, which I did not choose to do.)

"Charley wants to stay right where he is, here in these hills. He is not going to shoot anybody unless they come to take him away," said E. W. Floyd, his brother, who works in a garage and filling station at Sallisaw. E. W. is a mild mannered, good looking young fellow with a good local reputation.

Ruby Floyd, the outlaw's wife and mother of 9-year-old Jack, is part Cherokee Indian. She has brown eyes and hair, dresses modishly, but inexpensively.

As Floyd has not pulled a bank job since November, 1932, when he stole \$800 from the Bank at Boley, Oklahoma, and \$1,600 from the Bank at Sallisaw, he is not supposed to be very flush with cash.

While Ruby is working to arrange a compromise surrender with the Oklahoma authorities, and "Alfalfa Bill" Murray, governor, has stated there will be no compromise, Ruby is not certain she would ever live with the outlaw again. Friends of the outlaw's wife stated that whenever "Chuck" calls her she goes. She is said to have refused several large bribes to turn him in.

She is, however, capitalizing her association with him by lecturing in Indian costume with her son Jack, upon the topic, "Why Crime Does Not Pay." They appear with a motion picture showing Jackie being baptized. The money she gets will be used to defend her husband if he is brought in alive.

(I gave the idea to Ruby Floyd of getting into the moving pictures.

While talking with her at Fort Smith in June, I made the suggestion she could cash in on her publicity. I learned a few months later she made a trip to Pawhuska and borrowed some money from a full-blooded Osage woman, Susie Red Bird, to outfit herself for this project. The Red Bird woman told me herself she had loaned Ruby the money, and for what purpose.)

CHARLIE'S EARLY LIFE

Charley, or "Pretty Boy," as he came to be called, was born in Bartow county, Georgia. He is now 29 years old. At the age of five he came to what is now Sequoyah county, Oklahoma, then the Creek nation of the old Indian territory. Charley is the oldest of two brothers and four sisters. For several years Floyd's father operated a small grocery store at Aiken.

Floyd quit school when he was in the fourth grade, married Ruby, the 16-year-old daughter of Ben Hardgraves, an Indian rancher. Floyd and his bride moved into a two-room cabin and he began farming. The soil around Aiken is poor, crops were light, and when harvest hands were needed in 1925 in Kansas, Charley answered the call in order to get some ready cash.

Following the harvest, Floyd and Frank Hilderbrand, went to St. Louis, pulled a payroll job, and went back to Sallisaw in two new motor cars, their pockets lined with cash. Bert Cotton, city marshal then and now, knew the boys did not earn this money in the harvest fields, so he threw them into jail and later St. Louis officers came and got them.

This was Floyd's first job, so he said at the time. He was given five years at Jefferson City and served three. It was "Chuck" Floyd, a wild, young, Oklahoma roustabout, who went into prison, but it was a young man with a criminal mind who came out.

So, when Floyd was released, instead of returning to the hills of Oklahoma, he went to Kansas City with another released prisoner, who knew his way about, and the two of them joined the underworld gangsters. At a rooming house he met Beulah Baird, whose sister, Rose Ash, was married to Wallace Ash, a narcotic peddler with a knowledge of the underworld into which Floyd had decided to cast his lot. Beulah was an attractive young woman and she remained with Floyd for some years.

Inasmuch as Ruby and little Jack were not to be found, (she had married another man) Charley returned to Kansas City and soon teamed up with Jim Bradley, a fugitive from several prisons. Early in 1930, the "Pretty Boy," Bradley and Jack Atkins stole a motor car and started East. At Akron, Ohio, they ran through a traffic signal and Officer H. F. Mannes halted them. Thinking he was after them for other crimes, Jim Bradley shot and killed the policeman. For this act he was sent to the electric chair. Floyd was convicted of robbing a bank at Sylvania, Ohio, and given a 15-year prison term. Enroute to prison with an officer he leaped through an open window of a moving train and escaped. Finding his way to Toledo, he went to a hideout kept by Bert Miller, a desperado. Floyd and Miller began a crime career that lasted almost two years, or until Miller was killed at Bowling Green, Ohio. During this shooting scrape, Floyd murdered Officer Castner.

Before all this happened, however, Miller and Floyd paid a visit to Kansas City, went to the Ash boarding house and there met Rose Ash, wife of Wallace Ash, as well as renewed acquaintance with Beulah Ash. These two girls were sisters and were anxious for a whirl with gunmen. So, the four of them went away together. This set Wallace Ash and his brother Bill against the outlaws. They went to the police and "snitched."

After having pulled a successful bank robbery at Earlsboro, Oklahoma, in March, 1931, Floyd and Miller, with their "molls," returned to

Kansas City with the avowed intention of killing the Ash brothers, whose "snitching" by that time was causing the quartette a lot of dodging from the cops.

It was publicly charged by Mrs. Sadie Ash, mother of the Ash narcotic peddlers, that on the night of March 24, 1931, a feminine voice, believed to be that of Rose Ash, called her husband to a certain meeting place with the announced intention of "making up" with him. What really happened was that on the following morning the dead bodies of the two brothers, riddled with bullets, were found along a roadway, their upturned motor car near by. Ballistic experts were able to determine the bullets found in the bodies as matching Floyd's pistol.

A month later, Floyd, Miller, and the two women robbed a bank at Elliston, Kentucky, taking \$2,200. Two weeks later they were traced to a cottage at Algonac, Mich., but when the house was entered by officers the quartette had fled. On April 14 they robbed a bank at Whitehouse, Ohio, of \$1,400, and on April 15 they engaged in a terrific street fight at Bowling Green, Ohio, with officers who had been trailing them for days.

In this fight Bill Miller was killed, Officer Castner was shot to death, Beulah Baird was seriously injured and Rose Ash was captured. Floyd got away without attempting to help Beulah. Later the two women were freed, as nothing could be proven against them. But Beulah had now turned to hate Floyd and was helping the officers to trace him.

Floyd was next heard from on July 21, 1931, when in a raid by government agents on a large quantity of stored whisky at Kansas City, Mo., Floyd shot his way to freedom, killing prohibition agent Curtis Furke and bystander M. P. Wilson. A bootlegger who was with Floyd in the joint was killed.

FLOYD MOVES BACK TO OLD HAUNTS

The "Pretty Boy" now had six or eight killings charged to his account and was working up a big reputation with underworld leaders. Meanwhile he had had a great deal of bad luck in losing his pals in crime. It was reported he was having trouble getting anyone to team up with him. Bill Miller had been killed in a street fight, Jim Bradley had been legally electrocuted, Beulah Baird, his sweetheart, had been seriously injured. An Italian bootlegger at Kansas City had been deserted by Floyd and was shot to death. Gunmen were now saying that Floyd let his associates take the spot while he slunk away in the background.

Floyd now moved back to his old haunts in eastern Oklahoma, where he was still regarded as a great hero. He had a running shooting scrape with George Cheek, then sheriff at Sallisaw. He drove the sheriff back to town and then went on to Earlsboro, where he had pulled a successful bank robbery a year ago. He here found his old pal, George Birdwell, and the pair established a hideout in the Wildhorse mountains not far away.

Now he also succeeded in getting back his wife, Ruby, and little Jack Dempsey Floyd. They were placed in the outlaw's mountain home. Early in 1932, on January 14, Birdwell and Floyd robbed a bank at Paden, Oklahoma, kidnapped C. L. Sutherland, the cashier, and carried away \$2,500. The same day they robbed a bank at Castle, Okla., taking about \$2,000. The day following they robbed a bank at Dover, taking \$800. And then they sent a relative to Governor Murray offering to surrender on certain terms. These conditions were refused and the governor called a meeting of all the sheriffs in Oklahoma to devise ways and means of capturing these terrors.

On February 11, 1932, the police department at Tulsa learned that Floyd, Birdwell, Ruby Floyd and little Jack were living in a cottage in

the residence district. About 15 officers surrounded the cottage, tear gas bombs were used, but Floyd and Birdwell got away, while Ruby Floyd and little Jack walked out unmolested after the policemen had followed the two bandits. Later Mrs. Floyd was picked up and put in the Tulsa jail, then released.

Ruby was flush with money. She bought a new motor car and drove frequently to the home of her father, Ben Hardgraves, at Bixby. It was found that Floyd came there to meet her on several occasions. His visits usually took place at night, although once he came in broad daylight. George Birdwell rode with him and no officer dared attack them, it seemed.

KILLS A FAMOUS LAWMAN

Then into the picture came Ery Kelley, a former sheriff of McIntosh county, who had known both Floyd and his wife when they were youngsters. Ery Kelley told Mrs. Floyd that he would capture her husband alive and have him in the Tulsa jail within 30 days.

"If you think you are so smart, I am going to give you a chance to find him," Ruby Floyd told the officer. "I'll fix it so you can meet up with him and then he'll kill you dead."

That's just what happened on the night of April 8, 1932. Charley Floyd came riding down the road, accompanied by Birdwell, and the ever-present artillery across their knees. When close to Ben Hardgraves' house Ery Kelley stepped out into the road and demanded that the outlaws throw up their hands. It was a bold move, but he thought he had the drop on them and was safe. They drew and fired, Ery Kelley went down with four bullets in his head.

And then for months, in fact until November 23, banks were robbed by the dozen. Floyd and Birdwell got into positions in the hills and sent word to the officers to come and get them. (I saw several of these hideouts while travelling through the Cookson hills with a relative of Floyd's.) The outlaws seemed to be looking for battles with the officers so they could pick them off.

In a daylight battle on the Echols farm near Ada, Oklahoma, on July 7th, Floyd and Birdwell, barricaded in an old barn, drew fire from half a dozen officers and managed to drive them all away, after wounding several.

Something happened in the fighting career of Floyd on November 23 of that year which is said to have been a turning point in his career. His boyhood friend and pal, George Birdwell, was shot and killed by the cashier of a bank at Boley, a Negro settlement in the Oklahoma oil fields. This seemed to put a quietus on Floyd because after that he has never been known to have executed another bank robbery.

His only appearance since that time was at Bolivar, Mo., on June 15, 1933, when he kidnapped Sheriff Jack Killingsworth, took him for a long joyride over north Central Missouri, and then released him unharmed.

It was believed that Floyd had quit bank robbery for the rum-running racket, and evidently since then he has decided that rum-running is too dangerous.

* * *

About one week before I received a midnight call to go to Sallisaw and tell Floyd's mother he was being surrounded and killed, or captured. I made a trip into the Cookson hill region and wired a story to the United Press from Tahlequah, as follows:

* * *

GRAPEVINE NEWS PLENTIFUL

Grapevine news is plentiful in this section. Fact and fiction keep both ends of the wire going. Wagging tongues are busy on all neighborhood telephone lines. It's all about Charley Floyd, whose phantom performances have put him back in the headlines again.

You never call him "Pretty Boy" in these parts; it marks you as a rank outsider. To fit the local situation, if you want to get any facts at all you should call him "Chuck."

"Chuck" is not here in these hills any more," says one.

"Oh, yes, he is," says another. "He's never been away. Pretty soon he is going to open another safe of money which he has hidden away since 1930-1932, when he did so much bank robbing in Oklahoma."

Floyd is all the farm relief they need down here in the Cookson hills, it would seem. When he has money, the hill folk say, every needy person gets a slice. The Floyd generosity appears to be more than legendary, because every merchant in the backwoods who has been interviewed by this correspondent affirms the story.

Floyd has a lot of money hidden away, the folks here assert. But his mother, sisters, and brother at Sallisaw say he hasn't got enough to hire a good lawyer.

Grapevine news, for the most part, belittles front-page stuff that Floyd has been out of these hills. They believe he will come out and surrender some of these days. A deputy sheriff at Jay told this reporter that whenever Floyd got ready he would pop into town, throw his pistols on the sheriff's desk, and then put his lawyers to work.

* * *

While my efforts, made in June, 1934, to obtain a signed story from Ruby Floyd about her life with the outlaw, proved to be unavailing, (although I had offered her \$100 to sign the story) she did give out a signed statement about a week after her husband was killed and buried. One signed statement was made to a reporter for the *Journal-Post*, (with which newspaper I was associated as a feature writer) but she told me another story at Pawhuska while she was "in conference" with her financial backer, Susie Red Bird, a rich Osage woman. I never got to sell my story because, soon after Floyd's death, his name and deeds seemed to go on the black-list with most editors. Here is the way my story read:

* * *

RUBY TELLS HER OWN STORY

"I am not trying to square my late husband with the world for his former misdeeds, but I want to say, in the beginning, he never had a square deal. He had a tough time of it from the time he was a kid to the time his father was killed. Had to work on the red claybank farms around Aiken and Sallisaw, where he barely made a corn-bread living.

"I fell in love with him while we were attending a country school in the early part of 1924. I was 16 years old; he was a few years older. We got married right away and moved to his father's farm, but we never saw hardly any money, while the neighbor boys all seemed to have plenty.

"Charley took this for a while, then decided to do something about it. When our boy was born in December, 1925, Charley said he had to make some money, so he left home without telling me where he was going. That was about 14 months after we had gotten married, and we were still in love with one another.

"Some of the boys around Sallisaw said he was working in the harvest fields but I knew better, because he sent me money that he never

could have earned so quickly. The day he was supposed to reach home I dressed in my best and got ready to go in to Sallisaw to meet him because I supposed he would be riding in on the train.

"But before I could get ready and get started into town a neighbor came with bad news. He told me that Charley had been arrested the minute he struck Sallisaw because he was driving a brand new motor car. Bert Cotton, the city marshal, just knew he could not have come by it honestly.

"I was told by this neighbor Charley had been taken to Fort Smith, on a federal warrant, and was held there for St. Louis police. He was accused of robbing a bakery. I tried for some time to get in touch with him, but could not. Then I read in a newspaper where he had been given five years in prison. I was sick in mind and body and left the Floyd home to go to the home of my father, Ben Hardgraves, at Bixby. My mother was dead. I kept house for my father and continued to live with him. I never had one word from my husband. It hurt me, for we had never had any quarrel about anything. I just could not understand it all.

"In the Fall of 1929 Charley was released and came to me at Bixby. He asked my forgiveness and went to work in the oil fields near my father's home. I held high hopes for the future. The pay checks came in regularly and we were all happy in the little cabin. We talked about his prison record and he thought it had all been forgotten.

"One night there was a store robbery near us and the next day officers came and put Charley in jail. He was at home asleep when this robbery took place but there was no way of convincing the law. They told him they knew he had served time in Missouri, so he was first on the suspect list. A few days later, being unable to prove anything, he was released. But that caused him to lose his job with the oil company where he worked.

"He came home and said, 'They will hound me the rest of my days, and every time anything happens they will pick me up and put me in jail. I am just another convict to them.'

"In a few days he brought a fellow home named George Birdwell. They became good friends during the short time they had worked together in the oil fields. They would go out around the barn and talk together for a long time. I was not told what they talked about except Charley said they were not going back to work as oil roustabouts, as they had something better.

"One day Charley said we were all going to move to Tulsa and that Birdwell was going along with us. He said that he and Birdwell were going into business together. We moved into a nice little brick cottage out in the residence district. It was nicer than any other place I had ever lived in, but there was something about the whole thing that gave me the creeps.

"Every day Charley and Birdwell left our little home and drove away, often staying two or three days at a time. He said they were trading in oil leases. I was suspicious because I knew that Charley did not have enough business experience to handle an oil deal and Birdwell was no more educated.

"Then the boys began carrying home suit cases, which they locked up in closets. I asked Charley what was in the suit cases. He said they contained some clothing that belonged to Birdwell. That sounded unreasonable. The two men soon were flush with money and I had all that I could spend, too. I bought good clothes for myself and Jack. We attended all the shows, had a nice new motor car, and everything we wanted. I sent my father some money to do some improving around the old home place, for I felt sure that sooner or later I would be moving back there.

"Soon after we got going good in Tulsa, Walter Floyd (Charley's father) was shot to death and the man who killed him was freed by

the law. That was the big turning point in Charley's life. After that he became a different person. He talked about revenge and getting even with the world and people in general for giving him such a rough deal in life. All this did not make sense to me for we had been treated pretty well, I thought, for poor ignorant folks from the hills.

"I guess, though, after Walter Floyd was slain and his murderer cleared by the courts, Charley decided to turn outlaw, although he never said so in so many words. But he and George Birdwell brought home all kinds of shooting equipment and spent a lot of time in the woods practicing. Charley soon became what I thought was an expert marksman. I saw him hit the bullseye many times in succession, shooting with either right or left hand.

"Early in 1930, Charley went to Akron, Ohio, and I returned to my father's home at Bixby. Birdwell did not go with him, but I never did know exactly what happened. He said he was arrested and charged with killing a policeman, sentenced to prison, and on the way there managed to escape. I was never along with him in Ohio, so I do not know just what happened there. (According to police records Charley was accompanied on this trip by Beulah Baird, her sister, and another outlaw named Miller.)

"Son after the affair in Ohio, Charley came riding back to Oklahoma and visited me at Bixby. He asked me to move over to Tulsa with him, which I did. Birdwell came to live with us and the two of them began a bank robbing career in Oklahoma which lasted all of one summer and fall. In that time they must have robbed over 50 banks. They even robbed two banks in one day. I was flush with cash in those days.

"Then one day Charley decided to quit Birdwell and the Oklahoma scene for new pastures. He went away, and I moved back to Bixby and my father's cabin. One night in April, 1932, Erv Kelley, the sheriff, appeared at my father's house and told me he was going to kill Charley. I don't know just why he told me that, but he said that Charley and Birdwell were coming to my father's house that night and he—Erv Kelley—was going to be there and kill my husband.

"It looked to me like he was trying to get me to start out and find Charley and warn him, so he could follow me and surround him. I did not really know where Charley was, but I thought he might be around Tulsa. So I got ready to receive him.

"A little while after dark I saw the lights of a car turn up the lane from the main road to our cabin. I knew it must be Charley and Birdwell. Erv Kelley and several of his deputies were scattered behind chicken houses and barn. I would like to have shouted to Charley not to come any closer but I knew he would pay no attention to my warning. He felt like he lived a charmed existence, so far as enemy bullets were concerned.

"Now Erv Kelley moved up onto the porch. He held a shot gun in readiness. When the car stopped in the driveway the sheriff stepped out and commanded the men to throw up their hands. I know he could not see who was in the car, behind their blazing headlights. He was taking a desperate chance. A machine gun replied to that challenge and Sheriff Kelley fell dead.

"The men in the car, and mind you I am not sure it was Charley and Birdwell, turned the car around and fled. They never spoke to me, although I ran out on the porch and could be plainly seen. I left my father's home soon after that and went to Tulsa again, where I rented a furnished house.

"One night Charley came to see me. I was surprised when he removed his hat and coat and I saw him wearing a bullet-proof vest and a steel skullcap. That is why the stories told about him laughing when the officers fired at him point blank were true. That is why he missed being killed when others of his pals were victims of the officers' bullets.

"He told me then he was not operating with Birdwell and that

he was going it alone. There had been some little trouble between them, but Charley said time would heal it up all right, and time did make them friends once again. Meantime Charley stayed around the house during the days and at nights we would go out to picture shows and drive around the country. We went over to see my father several times. Not once was Charley recognized; or at least that is what we supposed.

"But something went wrong. One night a whole flock of policemen stormed the house. Luckily, Charley was not at home. They went through the house searching for him and then went away. A few minutes after they had driven away Charley returned. I told him about the visit of the policemen and he hurried away without telling me what to do.

"So, after he had gone, I began packing and while doing so a policeman came and arrested me. He took me to the police station and I was allowed to send Jackie, by bus, to my father's home. That was about 1:30 on a Thursday morning. They began to put the heat on, questioning me in relays. I didn't know a thing. I hadn't seen my husband in ages, so I told them.

"Did they believe me? Not much. They would not let me sleep. First one policeman would fire a lot of questions at me, and then another would take his place. I was dead for lack of rest, but I held out. I never stood such torture. I was kept awake for 48 hours and then turned loose. I took the first bus for Fort Smith. There I rented another furnished house.

"In three days Charley was with me again. It was part of a standing arrangement we had made months ago, but when Charley left me hurriedly at Tulsa I did not know just what to do. I followed out my instructions, however, and here he was, back with me once more, safe and sound. It was somewhat of a miracle the way we fooled the cops. I really don't see how we did it.

"We lived in Fort Smith together for about six months, unmolested. Soon after we moved into the house on North 36th street, we found out that a deputy marshal lived right across the street from us. But that did not scare us a bit. Charley said it was nothing to worry about, as we were just as safe right under the nose of the federals as if miles away. They simply did not recognize him.

"Charley was getting restless and decided to go into the hills and contact some of the old gang. I took a ride in a motor car after he had gone, a ride with some friends of mine. We had an accident and I was put in the hospital. There I had to give my true name, for they thought I was going to die. I had been living under the name of Judy Jackson. Now I became Ruby Floyd.

"Of course, the newspapers made a lot about the wife of Outlaw Floyd being in the hospital. (This is where I came into the picture, having been sent to Fort Smith to get Rubby's life story). After I got out of the hospital, a friend of mine from Tahlequah, a Cherokee Indian just like me, loaned me some money and I rented a room right across the street from him. There I stayed for several months, my presence being known to the officers. (The sheriff at Fort Smith told me where to find Ruby, but when I went there she had just moved.)

"Meanwhile Charley was back in the hills with his pals. One day I read in the newspapers that while trying to rob a bank at Boley, a Negro settlement, Birdwell had been killed but Charley had gotten away. I suppose his armored clothes had kept him safe again. But he did not try to communicate with me.

"That happened in November, 1932. On June 17, 1933, Frank Nash, a convict, while being taken through the Kansas City Union Station, was machine gunned and the newspapers accused Charley of being the hired gunman who did the job. Four officers were also killed. Nash was killed by accident as Charley was supposed to have tried to liberate

him and shot him by mistake. I don't think it happened that way at all. Charley was too accurate in his shooting.

"A few days after the Kansas City massacre I saw Charley at We-woka. He was well heeled and gave me a large amount of money. I did not ask him where he got it, nor did we mention the Kansas City shooting. He said he was going away to hide but that he would see me from time to time and told me to stick around Fort Smith, close to Sallisaw. I did so.

"The last time I ever saw Charley was in June, 1934. (That was about the time of my visit to Fort Smith to try to get her story. She had been out of the hospital for some time, following another wreck.) He told me then to take care of Jackie and have him baptized. It was a rough and tumble life, the one I lived with Charley Floyd, but if I had it to do all over again I would not change my plans at all."

(That is what Ruby Floyd said then; later she changed her line of talk and said she regretted her years spent as the outlaw's wife.)

* * *

MOTHER DOES NOT WEEP

In connection with the slaying and bringing home of the body of Outlaw Floyd, and the reaction of his native town of Sallisaw, I will quote from a dispatch I wired the United Press on the night of October 22, 1934, and printed in all the afternoon papers October 23, 1934. It gives you a fair idea of how things stood in Floyd's home town and how his family accepted the news that he had been killed. I wrote:

* * *

Finances permitting, relatives plan to bring bandit Floyd's body back to Sallisaw immediately and bury it beside his father in the little graveyard at Aiken. Such arrangements depend upon raising the necessary funds, it was explained by Mrs. Mamie Floyd, the bandit's mother. Having long been drained of her tears, Mrs. Floyd received news of her son's death from reporters dry-eyed. For several minutes she stubbornly refused to believe such a fate had befallen him.

Mary Floyd Latimer, the youngest sister of the bandit, stood on the porch of their little home and wept loudly; another sister, inside the living room, did likewise, but the mother was stoical in her demeanor. However, Tuesday Mary was back on her job as waitress. Her husband died recently. "They shot my brother down like a dog," she told friends who tried to console her.

The cafe where Mary works joins the bank where "Pretty Boy" and his former crime pal, George Birdwell, staged one of their holdups and kidnapped the cashier, "just for the fun of the thing." Little Mary is attractive, looks quite like her late brother.

"Charley never had a chance like other boys," she told me. "We have always been poor. I have had to slave myself; so have my other sisters and brother. Charley craved a few luxuries. That was his downfall. He never killed a single person. He told me so and I surely believe him. Now that he is dead, I want you reporters to go away and leave us alone."

Hours after the bandit's death had been confirmed by his intimates—they refused to believe it when I told them—the mother was pacing around her little home like a caged animal, sullen and defiant toward all advances or consolation offered by those from whom she did not wish to hear it.

It was tragic to note the mother's attitude in direct contrast to that of the woman who six months ago received this same reporter with poise and sad dignity and discussed her son's affairs. The patient, hopeful, religious woman had been transformed into bitterness by what her

children termed the persecution of the public, morbidly eager for any news of her son—especially his capture or death, another toll of an innocent life wrecked for a guilty one.

"There will be no public funeral if I can prevent it," Mrs. Floyd said to me. "I will forbid photographers and reporters to attend the services." (Of course, they attended, anyhow.)

She wired police at East Liverpool, Ohio, to turn the body of her son over to undertakers, but refuse permission to newspaper photographers to take pictures of it as when John Dillinger was slain in Chicago by federal officers. (No pictures were taken.)

She requested the Sallisaw newspapers to print only a brief mention of the incident and one of the editors told me he would comply with her demand. "Charley is just another town boy," said the editor, "and not entitled to much space in our paper."

Recently the Floyd family have been gathering in all the pictures of Charley they could find. I tried to dig up some pictures taken of him when he was a school-boy and drove miles and miles, from the house of one neighbor to another, but was told that Mrs. Mamie Floyd had recently gathered up all such photographs.

Mrs. Floyd was loyal to her son, even to the moment of his slaying. When news was radioed to Sallisaw Monday afternoon that it was believed Charley had made a get-away, she said she had not seen him for over a year. After his death she said she had seen him only a few days previously.

Bert Cotton, the town marshal, was not certain that Floyd had been killed at East Liverpool until he got direct word from that town's chief of police. Cotton told me Monday afternoon he felt certain Floyd was hiding somewhere in the Cookson hills, not far from Sallisaw. At that time I thought so, too.

Some people around Sallisaw thought Floyd's relatives would rise up to avenge his slaying. Others thought the whole thing would quiet down shortly. A former school-mate of Charley's told this reporter that Charley was through with Ruby, his wife, and had been for some time. "He never got over the fact that Ruby married another fellow while he was in the Missouri prison, although he did take her away from that fellow and live with her again. But he never did have much confidence in her."

Recently Ruby has been forced to earn her own living and she was doing it by going around the country, at the small picture shows, talking about her experiences with Outlaw Floyd. (I attended one of her alleged shows and found it to be very tame and not at all interesting. The show finally flopped because she did not draw sufficient crowds.)

* * *

A LIST OF FLOYD'S CRIMES

In June, 1934, I published in the *Kansas City Journal-Post* a chronology of Floyd's alleged crimes, based on news accounts. At that time there was a standing reward of \$7,500 for his capture, dead or alive. Later this was increased to \$25,000. (I was told that G-men collected this reward in full.) Here is a running story of some of Floyd's activities:

1925—Arrested at Sallisaw on September 12, charged with having robbed the Kroger Bakery at St. Louis, getting away with \$12,500. On December 9, Floyd pleaded guilty and was sentenced to five years in the Missouri state prison. He claimed he was innocent but that he was forced to plead guilty.

1929—On March 7, discharged from the Missouri penitentiary. On May 6, arrested at Kansas City suspected with being implicated in a highway robbery, later released. Four days later arrested at Pueblo,

Colo., on vagrancy charge, later released. On September 17, arrested at Kansas City as a robbery suspect, released November 18, found not to have been implicated.

1930—On March 8, arrested at Akron, Ohio, and held for investigation, later released. On May 20, arrested at Toledo, Ohio, later released.

1931—On March 20, William and Walter Ash, narcotic peddlers of Kansas City, found shot. Floyd was accused, but was not arrested. On April 16, he escaped in a gun battle at Bowling Green, Ohio, in which Willis Miller, a pal, and Ralph Castner, an officer, were slain. From May 1 to December 30, Floyd was charged by the newspapers with having committed some 15 Oklahoma and Kansas bank robberies.

1932—Erv Kelley, former sheriff of McIntosh county, Oklahoma, was shot to death at a raid on the Ben Hardgraves farm near Bixby. Floyd was accused of having been the assassin. On April 21, Floyd and George Birdwell, his Oklahoma boyhood chum, were accused of robbing a bank at Stonewall, Oklahoma. This was one of a series of bank raids which they were accused of having committed during April and May. April 28, while visiting friends at Earlsboro, Oklahoma, the sheriff confiscated Floyd's car, but Floyd recovered the car by forcing the sheriff to turn it back, taking away the sheriff's revolver and handing it back to him, minus the cartridges. On April 20, while attending the funeral of George Birdwell's father at Earlsboro, he swept the streets with his machine gun while he and George made a flying getaway. On May 19, officers found Floyd living at Tulsa with his wife and little son. They raided the place, but found no trace of the outlaw himself. On June 8, a posse surrounded a house at Stonewall, Oklahoma, in a search for Floyd and Birdwell. When commanded to surrender, the two outlaws fled amid a rain of bullets, without getting hit. On August 4, Floyd picked up H. W. Nave, a former Tulsa policeman, on the highway, stripped him of his clothing, and drove away laughing. On November 1, Floyd and Birdwell came to Sallisaw, shook hands with old friends on the streets. While Birdwell held off the crowd, Floyd robbed the bank and kidnapped the cashier, using him as a shield while the two bandits drove out of danger. The banker was then released. On November 23, Floyd and Birdwell raided a bank at Boley, Oklahoma. Birdwell killed J. D. Turner, the Negro bank president, and in turn was killed by another Negro bank official. Floyd made his getaway.

1933—On June 3, Bradley Floyd, brother of Charley, and two other small time bandits, were arrested at the home of Blackie Smalley, in Kansas City. "Pretty Boy" escaped. On June 16, Floyd and a pal named Adam Richetti, stopped at a filling station at Boliver, Mo., where Richetti's brother was a mechanic. Word soon spread the two bandits were in town. Sheriff Jack Killingsworth came to arrest them. Floyd pulled his machine gun on the sheriff, forced him into their motor car and hauled him all around north central Missouri, finally turning him loose at Kansas City. On June 17, machine gunners killed four officers and convict Frank Nash at the Kansas City Union Station. The tip-off on this holdup was given by long distance telephone from Joplin, Mo. Floyd is said to have been the machine gunner who carried on the raid, the purpose of which was to release convict Nash. For one time Floyd's aim was bad, as he killed the very man (Nash) he was being hired to release. Nash was being transferred from Hot Springs, Ark., to Fort Leavenworth. He was accompanied by a small, but well armed, band of officers, four of them dying in their efforts to preserve the law.

* * *

In order to complete the saga of the life and death of Outlaw Floyd, I am forced to use a newspaper story from East Liverpool, Ohio, dated October 22, 1934, telling about the end of the notorious bandit. This is the only part of this story I did not "cover" as a news writer. Here is the dispatch, in part:

LAWMEN KILL FLOYD

The long arm of the department of justice caught up with "Pretty Boy" Floyd, violent criminal of the Ozarks, near here today, and snuffed out his life in a hail of rifle, pistol and machine gun bullets. Federal agents came upon the bandit at a lonely farm seven miles north of East Liverpool. Fifty or more shots rang out as the officers halted the criminal's flight, and he fell, mortally wounded, unable to use either of the two automatics he was carrying.

Quickly the officers came upon his prostrate form. "Who the hell tipped you?" asked the dying man as they approached him. "Was it Eddie?" Just before he lost consciousness Floyd admitted to Melvin Purvis, head of the department of justice, "I am Floyd." It was then apparent Floyd knew he was dying.

Floyd was struck at least eight times, and possibly 20, by the officers' guns. He died about 15 minutes after being shot. The end came as officers were carrying him to a waiting automobile to take him to a hospital.

Death came to Floyd in the same violent manner by which he had lived. At the time he was slain, he was the principal object of a nationwide search, being sought as the trigger man in the Kansas City Union Station massacre in which five men were shot to death.

The officers who finally caught up with him were led by Purvis, the same federal operative who tracked down Dillinger. When the officers came upon Floyd he was talking to S. L. Dyke, a farm hand, employed by Mrs. Ellen Conkle, endeavoring to persuade him to take him to Youngstown, Ohio, where he thought he might find refuge in a more populated section.

As the officers approached, Floyd hid under a corn crib, but changed his mind at the last moment and started running for an automobile. Then he turned and ran across a pasture, toward a wooded hill. Purvis commanded him to halt. The command was unheeded. The officers then began firing and Floyd continued to run until some of the bullets found their mark.

Purvis hurried to the prostrate form, eager to catch the dying man's last words. Some of Floyd's final words were heard by others but some were heard only by the department of justice leader. These words he refused to reveal. Later, Floyd's body was brought to a mortuary at East Liverpool and placed on a slab.

The body had hardly arrived before a crowd of at least 500 persons collected outside. Floyd had \$120 in his pockets when he died. His two pistols were fully loaded.

Floyd had appeared at the farm this afternoon where he was seen by Arthur Conkle. Previously warned, as were all farmers in that section, to be on the lookout for strangers, Conkle notified the department of justice men at once.

Quick action by the officers followed. In just a few minutes they had raced from their headquarters a few miles away, closely followed by four East Liverpool policemen, to the Conkle farm. The shooting began almost immediately. At noon Floyd had asked Mrs. Alma Conkle if she could arrange to get him an automobile ride to Yungstown. While she prepared a meal for the outlaw, at his request, the outlaw talked to her about newspaper stories she had been reading about him, not admitting, however, that he was Floyd.

When the officers came and began firing, Floyd was only about 600 feet away. At that distance it would have been impossible for him to escape, but he might have killed a number of his opponents. The first shots that struck him apparently produced a numbness because he was unable to reply with a single shot.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

By E. Haldeman-Julius

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CATHOLIC CASUISTRY AND MEDICINE

Somebody sent me the other day, by registered mail, as if it were the manuscript of a lost work of Voltaire or St. Teresa, a little book of counsels to the Catholic student of medicine and surgery. It was published for private circulation by the Catholic hierarchy in New Zealand, but doubtless it circulates also in underground America. It is not half as entertaining as that secretly published booklet of Mark Twain on conversation at the court of Queen Elizabeth, and I did not waste on it much of the leisure which I devote to the reading of joke books.

I should explain that the Church is under a painful necessity to teach innocent young men certain worldly things. A priest cannot forgive a sin of which he does not know the precise degree of wickedness, so that when a girl in confessional tries to get off with the bland or blushing statement, "Please, father, I have been rude . . ." But the police would not permit me to give you the conversation that follows. It is enough that the confessor has to be forearmed with a knowledge of every freak and turn of sexual activity, and as even Catholic medical students and doctors confess their sins and ask advice about their difficulties he has to be ready for them.

Most of these "cases," as the theologian calls them, refer to child-bearing and birth, and this little private manual tells the priest what to say and the student or surgeon what he may or may not do. All sorts of difficulties arise when a doctor has ground to believe that if the fetus is allowed to develop fully parturition will kill the mother. You say that commonsense and common humanity soon solve that problem. Of course, you would sacrifice the fetus and save the mother but Catholic moral theology, which, you are told, never conflicts with the moral sentiments of decent men or the law, looks at it from a different angle. The fetus has an immortal soul, and, whatever the law says, you commit homicide in the first degree if you cause abortion under any circumstances whatever. When does the soul emerge from some vasty deep and join the embryo? Theologians are not sure, but my manual of theology puts that great event on the strength of "ancient canon laws"—implying that they knew more about these mysteries in the dark age—between the 40th and 80th day after conception. At the 40th day the human embryo is a grotesque little lump of protoplasm less than half an inch in size: at the 80th day it has shed its long lizard-like tail and looks fairly human, a homunculus of about 2½ inches. Must the Catholic doctor sacrifice or endanger the life of your wife for this? Ahem. The casuist begins to casuize. Why not recommend a non-Catholic doctor? You know what he will do, but, after all, you don't *make* him do it, and it is possible to convey a suggestion without making one. In fact, since the moral essence of an act is in the intention, even a Catholic doctor may find a way out. What he *intends* is just to save the life of the mother. If there are unpleasant consequences that he does not directly desire . . . The great thing is to make

sure that you can squirt a little baptismal water on the fœtus before it dies or it cannot enter heaven.

That is only one case in connection with pregnancy. Difficulties increase when the fœtus is fully developed but birth would kill either the mother or the child or a cæsarian operation would be dangerous, and so on. Time after time the clerical manual condemns as a sin operations that surgeons commonly perform and regard as their duty. Another group of cases arise in connection with euthanasia. Doctors quietly do a good deal of it, this manual says, but it is a sin. The Catholic doctor is cheerfully told that he may placidly contemplate a man or woman racked by incurable cancer or something, because he or she may be expiating sins and get off more lightly when it comes to judgment. And, of course, there is always that useful distinction between what the doctor intends and what merely follows from his act.

I have no doubt that Catholic doctors as a rule take care to remain ignorant of these profound thoughts of their theologians and act as other doctors do; just as, while the preacher thunders about birth control, the Catholic population of Boston and Baltimore increases at very little more than its rate of increase in other circles. And this is only one of several ways in which this vaunted Catholic ethic differs from that of ordinary folk. How many people know that a Catholic, if he persuades himself that you—even if you are a judge in court—are not entitled to a true answer, can make a "mental reservation": in plain American, lie with a good conscience? How many know that in regard to marriage the Roman law, published afresh in Rome a score of years ago and available in English, differs materially from American law? But don't ask your Catholic friend. Except that the Church strictly forbids divorce—but has an "ersatz" for the rich in reserve—and contraception he knows nothing about these things. He will tell you, as usual just repeating what the preacher says, that non-Catholics do not know his Church or the trickle of converts would become a river. Some of us could open his eyes about his Church.

* * *

WHEN THE WORLD IS RICH

A friend once put to a typical group of lower middle-class ladies, ladies who were exchanging currency for goods every day, this simple question: What is wealth? Every one of them replied Money, and they were astonished when my friend pointed out that it is the goods and services that you can get for money. Seeing that the amount of goods or services that you can get depends upon the money you have it might be suggested that they were not far astray but they were, and in regard to one of the most important aspects of their life, on the mental level of the boy who thought that his father was a fool to rush off to work every morning when he could get money from the bank when he liked. You could have closed the lips of these ladies at once by asking them why the U. S. Treasury does not print and distribute twice as much money as it does or why the same sum of money bought two dozen eggs at one time and only a dozen today. At the present time in Hungary, money is so plentiful that you pay 7 quadrillion 32 trillion pengoes for a pair of shoes. A man who did so went home and made an elaborate calculation that if he had had to pay for them in 1 million pengo notes he would have required enough of these notes to stretch, end to end, 12 times as far as the nearest fixed star. And 10 years ago he could buy a pair of shoes for 20 or 30 pengoes.

We want to get people to be as conscious of this truth as they are of the difference between a promissory note and hard cash. No country is rich today, most countries are poor, more than half the race is desperately poor, yet the earth could in a decade or two increase its wealth three or four or five-fold. Our country is far and away the richest country in the world but it is not really rich because it could create and

distribute amongst its people at least 50 percent more goods and services than it does today. In fact we to some extent fool ourselves when we speak of the wealth of the country and compare the wage of its workers with that of the workers of other countries. We heap up figures to express the wealth of this country from 1918 to 1928. But what about its condition from 1928 to 1938? We say that the worker has 50 or 100 percent more than any other worker. We mean that the steadily employed skilled worker has, but what about the vast numbers of unemployed, partially employed, superfluously employed, parasites, and so on? The golden days of war-production proved what we could do; yet 10,000,000 able-bodied folk were off the market, millions of others were in secondary war-work instead of production, and there were still vast numbers of parasites and folk who had immensely more wealth than any man or woman ought to have. But we dare not produce the clothes, shoes, furniture, etc. for lack of which millions are poor, because we say that we can't distribute them. The greatest inventor in American history would be the man who discovered how, without Socialism, to distribute purchasing power to meet an unchecked production of goods.

This is what we call wealth. The acreage of real poverty is far larger. The International Agricultural Organization recently reported that even before the war more than one half the people of the world were seriously undernourished, and that only one person in three gets the full number of calories which dietitians call a normal requirement. The facts ought to be broadcast nightly into rooms where folk eat \$10 or even \$15 meals: countries stuff themselves with food to the risk and occasional breakdown of their health. That is the reverse of the shining medal of Private Enterprise. And this shortage of food is only one item in a list of a hundred shortages. Indeed, as poor folk must make any sacrifice of other things to get food, the one absolutely vital requirement, we can guess how they fare in other respects. The one luxury they can afford, since it costs nothing, is breeding, and their appalling poverty and ignorance mean that they are breeding pain, misery, and an immense crop of early deaths.

These people, more than half the human race, are capable, if they were fully fed and trained, of producing at least as much wealth as the prewar Japanese worker. He was, in fact, undernourished, as 100 greedy men took an abnormal share of the wealth he produced, so that his low wage is misleading. Their poverty is, of course, only partially due to undernourishment. Mainly it is due to their primitive and unscientific methods of production, and to change this a vast amount of industrial and agricultural capital is needed. Without forgetting this—it was, remember, true of America and Britain, France and Germany, 150 years ago and of Russia only 20 years ago—no one can doubt that these hundreds of millions of workers, mainly members of races (the Chinese and Hindus) that have been civilized far longer than any branch of the white race, are capable of producing at least three times as much as they do.

There is a proportionate margin for improvement in all lands right up the scale as far as the United States. Writers traveling through Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece 20 years ago saw peasants tickling the ground with a horn set in a frame to which an ass and a cow were yoked, or spending a whole day carrying their meager produce to market on the backs of asses and disposing of it, where one hour's run with a modern truck and one man and sensible marketing would relieve 50 small producers of their 12-hour waste of time. The change was beginning but an agricultural expert said that these countries could produce five times the food they were producing. Taking one country with another I roughly estimate that our world (when its people are not too busy fighting each other) produces about two trillion dollars' worth of goods a year. The sum could, without any new discoveries of science—and these are increasing rapidly in number and value—become 10 trillions in a few decades. In fact, if you are one of those who think that the Rus-

sians, who more than trebled their production of wealth in the 10 years when depression lay upon the world, are inefficient and their workers sullen and disgruntled, you will conclude that my estimate of how rich the world could become in the next 20 years or so is below the mark.

* * *

A CHIP OF THE OLD BLOCK

When Charles Darwin, one of the mildest men who ever blew up a planet, startled the world with his "Origin of Species," nothing was known about the factors of heredity. Children resembled their parents. The seed of a beautiful rose develops into one of its kind. A good milch cow yields other good milch cows. But with variations. In the same litter of young or bunch of seedlings some are stronger or otherwise better than others. The destructive agencies of Nature, Darwin said, destroy the weaker (or otherwise less fit) and so negatively select fitter. Carry the variation in one particular direction over 4,000 generations or so and you get a different type of animal from the original parent. When it was realized that the story of life has been going on for more than a billion years this "natural selection" seemed to have time to work out the great variety of Nature.

Meantime experts had been at work on the factors of inheritance. Weismann said that there must be "determinants" in the germ which built up the organs of the body; which was not much of a discovery, since we always knew that it was not a spiritual principle or a particular atom that built the new body. Next other researchers said that we could identify the particles or "genes" in the fertilized ovum that built up the eyes, the heart, the stomach and so on, and the scientific study of inheritance began. We founded the science of heredity, and it has contributed interesting and valuable discoveries to science. But for a time it took itself too seriously. It not only gave the preachers occasion to compose a joyous chant that Darwinism (which never speculated on the factors of inheritance) was dead. In this respect we just swatted the clerical flies that were buzzing round us. More serious was the cry that the action of environment, which played so important a part in Darwinism, was practically negligible. A genius or a moron, a criminal or a churchwarden, was born, not made. If you wanted a higher type of race you must breed it. The school is environment, so it was useless for teachers to think that they could make good or smart men out of children from tainted or stupid stocks. One enthusiast traced the ramifications in New York of a criminal stock and the fragrant branching of a virtuous stock. He forgot to inquire scientifically what the very different environment of the two families might have had to do with it.

There was always one fact that, with a dozen others, kept me out of the rush for the new scientific bandwagon. It was the very remarkable variation in intelligence between parents and offspring. Naturally in the human case there are plenty of variations because we inherit from grandparents and earlier folks as well as from two parents. But the sudden appearance of a man of superior intelligence in a stock in which neither the parents nor their parents or grandparents had been above the level of mediocrity is especially significant. The geneticists or eugenists tried to get out of the difficulty by discovering in the parents a superiority of intellect which would have surprised not only their neighbors but even themselves. Galton wrote a whole work on his discoveries of genius in the parents, who had died with their splendid gifts undisclosed, of our geniuses. I suppose some of them will find presently that Wells's very humdrum and dull parents were marked geniuses.

It is a sin in science to force the factual material into the world of a theory, and no good ever came of it. Science came again to recognize the great importance of environment, and the sort of scientific Calvin-

ism that predestined a man, or the strength of his inherited genius, to the career of a burglar or a bishop, a rebel or a milksop, a novelist or a murderer, is practically dead. Social psychology has in fact gone so far in stressing environment in the creation of personality that we are in danger at times of forgetting what we really owe to heredity. It is a pleasant and encouraging change. We can alter the environment, especially the educative forces that give a man his sets and ideas, and every good sociologist always favored the idea that nurture (education) is much more important than nature (the hereditary outfit). There are even psychologists who now go to the other extreme and say that we can make man, both in degree of intelligence and behavior, in the image and likeness of any ideal upon which we may agree.

It is wiser to wait until we have tried. Consistency in the molding agencies is essential to success in forming a fairly consistent standard of intelligence and character in the youth of a nation; and only one country, Russia, which is, of course, beneath notice, has shown this consistency. We hardly like to recall Hitler's monopoly of the educational forces from 1934 to 1939, but it does show what can be done in five years by consistency in the environment. There is no plastic surgery needed as there is when any other organ of the body is to be changed. There, it is true, violence has to be used to alter the outcome of the genes. But the organ of intelligence and of social behavior is inherited in a very different form. It is not the brain or the cortex or the gray cells, as popular writers love to say, when they want to make a parade of their knowledge. It is about a spoonful of special and very immature cells in a particular region of the brain, and, though there is undoubtedly a limit that forbids high intelligence to many, no man yet knows how far the cells may be developed by scientifically directed cultivation or to what extent our growing control of the glands which affect them will help the educationist. This is one of the respects in which we may find legitimate consolation in even a vague view of the future. We are only at the very beginning of this great human enterprise. If we had given to it the amount of attention that we have given to physics for 70 years it is not atom bombs that would now be engaging our interest.

* * *

SAINTS AND SINNERS

I had occasion recently to make first-hand (or eye) observation of life in a small religious institution. A lady friend who had undergone a very severe operation was sent to this place for convalescence. She was not informed that it was virtually a church home, although the authorities of the home were warned that she was an Atheist, or a rare and uncertain species of animal—in a city in which, the Church itself declares, at least nine out of 10 take no notice whatever of religion—to be watched carefully. On arrival we read together the book of rules. My friend smokes like a chimney, swears in decent moderation, drinks when there is anything worth drinking, has never entered a church but goes to a movie once a week. According to the rules of this abode of virtue she was forbidden to smoke, must never be out after 6 p.m., must give 48 hours' notice if she desired to see a film (to give them time to discuss if it was quite proper), and so on. She persevered, and she found that the general behavior was so selfish and cattish, the din from furious quarrels (perhaps over the last cake on the dish) so nerve-racking, that the place was almost unendurable to any respectable Atheist. Her stores of clothing and little luxuries were looted, and the little jobs the patients were expected to do were mainly left to her; though she paid and most of the others did not. Quite the two worst were Roman Catholics who never tired of speaking of the beauty and superiority of their religion and their horror of "heathens."

One little nest of piety on the hills must not be taken as showing the typical behavior of some 10,000,000 people: the number claimed as

Christians by the Church in control of this "home." But every man of wide experience will recognize here one of the chief defects of the Christian code of conduct. It talks about ethics much as a foreigner pronounces the Indian names of places in America. The accent is generally on the wrong syllable. The dominating idea is an unnatural asceticism. Morality means sex-repression, with a few minor appendages like justice, kindness, amiability, honor, etc. The result naturally is that while the majority of these folk do make some effort at a repression of sex that is of no social or human importance; they have a quite false standard of behavior in the things that really matter. They quarrel with each other so violently and hysterically when a dozen of them have to live together for a few weeks that I suggested that they should change the name of the church society to which they belong to the KK's (Kats and Kittens). To be sure the Church gives them a golden rule, but it also recommends that they love their enemies, whereas they regard the slandering and baiting of a "heathen" as an act of piety. Their moral fiber, especially that of the Catholics, is flabby. They have little self-control and hardly recognize the need for it except in regard to sex; in respect of which they are in large part hypocrites.

Consider all this fuss that has been made about the canonization of a Chicago nun. The press did its best to please the Catholics. It carefully suppressed the fact that in Roman law a "saint" is not primarily a person of superior character to the rest of us. It is a man or woman who is proved in the Papal court to have (in the most literal sense) worked miracles. What sort of proof was given in the court, which is described as terribly strict and censorious—in reality it acts today on political considerations and for heavy fees—I have not taken the trouble to ascertain. Miracles in modern New York and Chicago is too good a joke. But the press generously shut its eyes to that aspect and was not interested in the cost. The canonization of Thomas More cost the British Catholics \$80,000. Surely Chicago trebled the bid of those pikers.

Whatever the price, and whatever the political deal with Washington, which must be proud that America has a saint at last, all the fuss about it is amusing. When you scrape off the rhetoric all you have is a declaration that one American Catholic in 40 or 50 million (counting three generations) acted quite logically on the Church's teaching that for every pleasure you sacrifice in this world you get a hundred in the next. That was the sanctity of Mother Cabrini. One of the Catholic papers I have before me heads an account of the saint's life with the words: "Holiness and business acumen combined remarkably in the life of the new U.S. saint." There is nothing remarkable about it. Saint-hood is a business. The price of that hundred-fold reward is stiff and only a determined business instinct makes the grade. A four-column account of her life in a Catholic paper is overwhelmingly taken up with her business ability. The only human note is the bare statement that she had "a lovely character," which does not appear much in some of her quarrels and intrigues. Her nuns are described as doing an immense amount of charitable work under her orders but she is quoted saying that she did this "for God." However, let us suppose that she wore a hair-shirt, a chastity girdle, peas in her shoes, and all the other paraphernalia of sanctity. Is that any reason for journalistic hysteria?

If this is Christian virtue in the heroic degree we are not surprised that it is so unsatisfactory in ordinary churchgoing folk. The man who thinks that the sight of a nude woman is a horror, the woman who professes to regard a love affair as a crime, while they are bitter against those who have different religious views or none and consider lying, sourness, cheating, etc., trifling in comparison with transgressions of an ancient and irrational sex-code do not make good citizens. Theirs is not the recipe for a happy and healthy civilization. If they are sincere, especially if they are "heroic" in their virtue, they are already citizens of another world and no good to this. Usually they are illogical and more or less hypocritical. The good citizens, in the full human sense, are what they call sinners. They cannot get round the solid fact that life

on this planet improves in proportion as saints grow less. Yet we still hear on every side the drone that ours is a Christian civilization and is threatened in its very foundations by the growth of skepticism and humanism.



MENTAL MUSH

Writers and radio speakers sometimes suggest that the progress of science ought to be suspended while the race makes up its leaway in the development of character. No thoughtful man, of course, takes the idea any more seriously than these oracles do themselves. A modern guide of public opinion is a man who is able to say something that nobody else says, or says it in a different patterns of words from anybody else, or spends a few hundred dollars a week bribing officials to tell him secrets of government departments. They are shrewd enough to understand this and would smile at anybody who took such a suggestion as the above seriously.

How could it be done? Do you want to close all the thousands of scientific laboratories and turn into parsons the hundreds of thousands of teachers of science and laboratory workers the world over? Do you suggest that science, starting almost from scratch a century or so ago, has done incalculably more in developing our intellect than the churches, with their wealth and legions of ministers, have done in 1,500 years for the development of our "moral sense"? Has not psychology made an end of this division of our mental activity into two branches, with separate dynamos, which philosophers, who used to play with these questions before science took them over, called intelligence and moral sense? Has not the science of ethics resolved this moral sense into a confused blend of ancient dogmas and emotions with intellect or commonsense dictating those lines of behavior that make most for the smoothness and welfare of social life? It is only another proof of the general sloppiness of intellect and mush of ideas in our time that organs of public instruction should think that the public would be seriously interested in such suggestions as the above. The one science at which the suggestion of muzzling is really aimed is physics, and physics is, like chemistry, doing wonderful work for the race just now, while it is certain politicians, military men, capitalists, and sectarians who want to make a barbarous use of its splendid discoveries. They want us to put the right muzzle on the wrong dog.

The suggestion would be more plausible or at least as useful theme for discussion if it were worded differently. It might run something like this: Let our scientific men, who have given such remarkable proof of their efficiency, pay a little less attention for a spell to the development of their own intellect and more attention to improving the intelligence of the mass of the people. Apart from the inevitable increase of unsocial conduct which the war-years brought about and the hard core of criminals whom penal law must gradually eliminate what is outstandingly wrong with our generation is that what it calls its mind, the real director of its behavior, is a mush of superficial, confused, and contradictory ideas and beliefs.

Someone sends me a clipping from a Catholic paper containing a glowing account of a debate of the youths of a Catholic university on what is wrong with the world. You can imagine their diagnosis: bad books, naughty films, and infidelity. The poor fishes, who were intensely flattered to be asked for *their* ideas on great questions, were too immature to reflect that the clerical authorities selected them precisely because they would most uncritically roll out the "opinion" of their pastors. A 'teener who does not recognize that the "opinion" of a 'teener is worth just nothing until he grows out of his 'teens, ought to use his eyes and ears more and his tongue less. The danger is that he will remain suggestible or hypnotizable for life, at the mercy of any loud voice in his

environment, as most people are: and the irony is that they regard the few of us who would teach them to think and give them the correct material to think about as rank outsiders, even Reds.

In Britain, where the general situation is the same, a Gallup poll has recently asked a cross section of the public whether they have any superstitions. Naturally they did not mean such things as belief in the creation of the world, the fall of man, the incarnation, or hell and heaven, which it is not respectable to call superstition. The organizers meant more important matters like avoiding passing under a ladder or fighting shy of Friday or the number 13. Considering that to admit harboring a superstition is generally regarded as weakness of mind or character the result of the inquiry was surprising, and to a social student painful. To the question "Are there any superstitions you believe in?" 24 percent boldly said yes, but when it came to detail a good half of them were guilty. About 30 percent—53 percent of them women—said that they believed it was lucky to touch wood. Nearly half of them (47 percent) believed that it was unlucky to pass under a ladder; and they do not seem to have been moved by the utilitarian reason that the man on the ladder might drop a brick or some spots of paint on you. The weirdest and wildest of beliefs were disclosed, and the organizers concluded that such beliefs are on the increase—in the fifth decade of the 20th century!—because only 35 percent of the men and women over 30 had superstitions but 45 percent of folk under that age.

This is the material of the politician and the parson, the astrologer and the psychological quack. Somebody sends me a pamphlet written by a parson on a dark incident at an unbeliever's grave. Somewhere in south Ohio is a monument over the grave of an Atheist. He is alleged—the only native quoted as questioned on the matter does *not* say this—to have said before his death: "If there is a God let snakes infest my grave," and sure enough they have infested it ever since, although, the pious author says, they are otherwise unknown in that part of America. That is typical of the kind of thing millions of Americans swallow like oysters. They are our great democracy. Small wonder that politicians, bankers, industrialists, and parsons have such a passionate zeal for democracy and hate Russia.

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